

Members

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Sen. John Waterman
Sen. Ryan Mishler
Sen. James Arnold
Sen. Robert Deig
Sen. James Lewis
Rep. Clyde Kersey, Vice-Chairperson
Rep. Dale Grubb
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Rep. Cleo Duncan
Rep. James Buck
Rep. William Davis



INTERIM COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

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Authority: Legislative Council Resolution 07-01

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: September 18, 2007
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: Terre Haute International Airport,
Conference Room
Meeting City: Terre Haute, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Rep. Clyde Kersey, Vice-Chair; Sen. James Arnold;
Sen. Robert Deig; Sen. James Lewis; Rep. Vern Tincher;
Rep. James Buck.

Members Absent: Sen. Thomas Wyss, Chair; Sen. John Waterman;
Sen. Ryan Mishler; Rep. Dale Grubb; Rep. Cleo Duncan;
Rep. William Davis.

In the absence of Senator Wyss, the Vice Chair, Representative Kersey called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. Committee members present introduced themselves. The Vice Chair recognized the following individuals:

Pete Ciancone, City of Terre Haute

Mr. Ciancone explained the concept of establishing an inland port near Terre Haute. Referring to aerial photographs, Mr. Ciancone described the real property that would be the site of the proposed port. The property consists of more than 7,000 acres,

1. Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

most of which is an abandoned mine. Most of the property is owned by a single entity. Mr. Ciancone also described railroad and other assets that would make the site attractive as an inland port.

Judy Anderson, Vigo County Commissioner

Ms. Anderson gave a brief account of the efforts Vigo County has made to advance the development of the property and recounted the cooperation with Clay County Officials.

The Vice Chair recognized several officials from Clay County that were present at the meeting.

Steve Witt, President, Vigo County Economic Development Corporation

Mr. Witt provided more detail about the information introduced by Mr. Ciancone. Mr. Witt discussed the project using the aerial photographs, pointing out the surface mine property and other undisturbed acreage. Mr. Witt listed the business assets currently at, or near the site, including utilities, manufacturing, a CSX railroad spur, and the nearby airport. Mr. Witt again emphasized that most of the property has a single owner that would like to sell the property. Mr. Witt also described a program of CSX called "megasite" certification for development of large railroad operations and the possibilities of the Vigo County site being so designated by CSX.

In response to Representative Kersey's question, Mr. Witt said that an inland port would have a large area for shipping containers and various warehouse, distribution, and logistics businesses.

Eric Levenhagen, Indiana Economic Development Corporation

Mr. Levenhagen discussed possible strategies for marketing the site to companies that would be good prospects for locating at an inland port. He discussed the "shovel ready" site development process. In response to a question from Representative Tincher, Mr. Levenhagen said that the Vigo County site was very attractive and fairly unique for development because of the size of the land owned by one person.

Mike Cline, Deputy Commissioner - Operations, Indiana Department of Transportation

Mr. Cline referred to aerial photographs of areas to the east of Terre Haute. Much of Mr. Cline's discussion related to the State Road 641 project and possible realignment of the route.² In response to questions from Representative Tincher and Representative Kersey, Mr. Cline discussed a possible interchange at Tabertown Road, the alignment of State Road 641, and the public hearing process relating to State Road 641.³

2. Mr. Cline distributed an outline of his remarks, which is Exhibit 1.

3. Mr. Cline distributed copies of a letter addressed to him from Robert F. Tally Jr., P.E., Division Administrator, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The letter, dated September 13, 2007, discussed two potential interchanges on I-70 near Terre Haute and is Exhibit 2.

Rich Cooper, Executive Director, Indiana Ports Commission

Mr. Cooper introduced Mr. Greg Gibson, member of the Commission, and Jody Peacock, Director of Corporate Affairs for the Commission.

Mr. Cooper discussed the factors that make successful intermodal projects. He said the key is to have reasons that trains will stop in Indiana. Stopping trains here will increase economic activity. But ultimately markets, the railroads and shippers will determine where railroad hubs will be located.

In response to questions from Representative Buck relating to the entity that will own the real property where an inland port is located, Mr. Cooper said that the railroads usually don't want to have extensive real estate holdings. Senator Arnold asked whether the power of eminent domain would be used to acquire property. Mr. Cooper conceded that eminent domain was available to the Commission to acquire property but would be used only as a last resort. During the discussion, a letter from the owner of the largest parcel of real estate that could serve as the site of an inland port near Terre Haute was distributed.⁴

In response to a question from Representative Kersey, Mr. Cooper said that the Terre Haute site is a very attractive site for an inland port, but reiterated that the railroads will determine where such facilities are located. He added that he believes that CSX thinks its Indianapolis facility is not fully used and may want to see it used more extensively before developing another facility.

The Vice Chair asked if any other individuals wished to speak about this meeting's topic.

Bill Verdeyen, representing the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, discussed railroad traffic patterns, possible expansions of the rail network and the relationship to the Terre Haute site.

Economic Development Specialist Jim Coffenberry stated he was asked by Senator Waterman to express support for location of an inland port near Terre Haute.

Brian Hasler, representing the City of Terre Haute, expressed gratitude to the Committee for holding the meeting and summarized many of the points made by the other speakers.

Committee Discussion

Senator Arnold said that location of a similar facility in LaPorte County is being discussed in his district. He said that there is much disagreement in his community because establishing the facility would require acquisition of excellent farm property from several owners. Senator Arnold said that the Terre Haute site appears very promising because of the characteristics of the location.

Representative Buck asked what the General Assembly's role might be at this point

4. The letter, Exhibit 3, is from Byron Levkulich for Chinook Properties, LLC to Steve Witt, dated September 13, 2007.

during the conversation about an inland port near Terre Haute. Does the General Assembly need to designate the site as an inland port? Is funding an issue? There was discussion among Committee members and the speakers about property values, the possibility for speculation in real estate occurring, and whether environmental studies have been conducted.

Select Next Meeting Date

The date and time of the next meeting were not set and will be announced at a later time after staff consults with the Chair.

Adjournment

Before adjournment it was announced that the State Police would conduct a tour of the I-70 weigh station for those interested in visiting.

The Vice Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:26 a.m.